17. (Amended) A method of mapping a single incoming call addressed to a particular dialed number to plural terminals via an H.323-based communication system, comprising the steps of:

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receiving the incoming call;

translating the incoming call into an H.323-compatible signal;

accessing a configuration database to [determine] identify the terminals corresponding to the dialed number; and

transmitting line appearance signals to each of the [respective] identified terminals.

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the disclosure for minor informalities; rejected claims 1-10 and 12-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kumar et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,006,253) in view of Pepper et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,930,700); and rejected claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kumar et al.

By this Amendment, Applicants have amended the specification and claims 1, 2, 4, 9-11, 15, and 17 to improve form. Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

The Examiner objected to the specification, requiring that the serial numbers of the copending applications be provided. In response, Applicants have amended the specification to provide these serial numbers. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-10 and 12-19 as unpatentable over Kumar et al. and Pepper et al. The Examiner alleged that this combination of references discloses the invention substantially as claimed. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Kumar et al. discloses an H.323 system that provides a back-channel for receiver terminals in a loosely-coupled conference (col. 2, lines 46-63; Fig. 1). Pepper et al. discloses a system that allows a subscriber to have incoming telephone calls screened to identify those calls that are of the highest importance to the subscriber (col. 4, lines 62-65).

By contrast, the present invention recited in independent claim 1, for example, includes a combination of elements, including a gateway and a signal routing agent. The gateway communicates with a switched circuit network and translates switched circuit network-compatible signals into computer network-compatible signals. The signal routing agent communicates with the gateway and with one or more terminals. The signal routing agent receives plural incoming calls from the gateway addressed to a selected one of the terminals and simultaneously transmits plural line appearance signals corresponding to the incoming calls to the selected terminal.

Neither Kumar et al. nor Pepper et al., whether taken alone or in any reasonable combination, discloses or suggests this claimed combination of elements. Among other things, neither reference, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests a signal routing agent that receives plural incoming calls and simultaneously transmits plural line appearance signals corresponding to the incoming calls to a selected terminal.

The Examiner admitted that Kumar et al. fails to disclose a signal routing agent that simultaneously transmits plural line appearances to a selected terminal (Office Action, page 3). The Examiner relied upon Pepper et al. for allegedly disclosing this element. The Examiner

alleged that Pepper et al. discloses a personal digital assistant (PDA) connected with programmed software stored in a database to automatically transmit appearance signals to the screen of the PDA (Office Action, page 3). Regardless of the accuracy of the Examiner's allegation, Applicants respectfully submit that Pepper et al. fails to disclose the signal routing agent, as currently recited in independent claim 1.

Pepper et al. discloses a system that includes a PDA operating in conjunction with a signaling network (Fig. 3). The signaling network includes a database that maintains a network copy of a subscriber's daily schedule and client list that are used, along with a subscriber's default profile, to determine which calls to forward directly to the subscriber at his current location and which calls to forward to the subscriber's voice mail box (col. 6, lines 5-11). When a call arrives for the subscriber, the signaling network answers the call, determines the call's origin if possible, determines a priority for the call, and routes the call based on the priority (col. 6, lines 12-54). The subscriber may be notified via a pop-up window on the PDA of the presence of a pending call (col. 6, lines 42-45; Fig. 10). The subscriber may also be notified of recently received messages, such as voice mail messages (col. 8, lines 60-64; Fig. 7).

Pepper et al. fails to disclose or suggest a signal routing agent that receives plural incoming calls and simultaneously transmits plural line appearance signals corresponding to the incoming calls to a selected terminal, as recited in claim 1. In fact, Pepper et al. fails to address multiple incoming calls being received and, therefore, fails to disclose simultaneously transmitting plural line appearance signals corresponding to the incoming calls to a selected terminal. Kumar et al. provides nothing to cure these deficiencies in the disclosure of Pepper et al.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 is patentable over Kumar et al. and Pepper et al., whether taken alone or in any reasonable combination. Applicants further submit that independent claim 15 and dependent claims 2-8 and 16 are patentable over the above-recited combination of documents for at least the reasons given with regard to claim 1.

Independent claim 9 recites a combination of elements, including a signal routing agent, a gateway, and at least one gatekeeper. The gateway receives an incoming call and translates the call into computer network-compatible signals. The gatekeeper communicates with the gateway and in response to receipt of the incoming call controls the gateway to transmit the computer network-compatible signals to the signal routing agent. The signal routing agent in response to receipt of the computer network-compatible signals identifies corresponding ones of the terminals assigned to receive the computer network-compatible signals and transmits line appearance messages to each of the terminals.

Neither Kumar et al. nor Pepper et al., whether taken alone or in any reasonable combination, discloses or suggests this claimed combination of elements. Among other things, neither reference, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests a signal routing agent that receives computer network-compatible signals, corresponding to an incoming call, and identifies corresponding terminals assigned to receive the signals, and transmits line appearance messages to each of the terminals.

Kumar et al. is silent with regard to this element. Pepper et al. discloses routing a call to locations in the alternative only (col. 12, lines 7-67). Pepper et al. discloses "[d]epending on the subscriber's schedule and the caller's assigned priority, the caller may be connected directly to the subscriber at a telephone number listed in the appointment calendar or to the PDA 200 (if it has voice communications) or to any other predetermined call delivery address" (emphasis added)

(col. 6, lines 37-42). Therefore, Pepper et al. fails to disclose a signal routing agent that transmits line appearance messages to multiple terminals addressed by an incoming call.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 9 is patentable over Kumar et al. and Pepper et al., whether taken alone or in any reasonable combination. Applicants further submit that independent claims 17 and 19 and dependent claims 10, 12-14, and 18 are patentable over the above-identified combination of documents for at least the reasons given with regard to claim 9.

With regard to dependent claim 11, the Examiner improperly rejected the claim as unpatentable over Kumar et al. alone, while rejecting base claim 9 using a combination of Kumar et al. and Pepper et al. The Examiner alleged that Kumar et al. discloses the invention substantially as claimed. Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claim 11 is patentable over Kumar et al. for at least the reasons given above with regard to independent claim 9.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, and the timely allowance of this application.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 07-2339. If an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, is required, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

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